

# NEWS RELEASE

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*For Immediate Release*

**JULY 22, 2005**

Ronald J. Tenpas, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, announced today that on July 22, 2005, **MATTHEW WAYNE ADAMS**, age 35, of 6 Briarcliff Drive, Granite City, Illinois, was sentenced to serve a 37 month term of imprisonment following his plea of guilty to an Indictment charging him with perpetrating an eBay auction fraud and to an Information charging him with possessing ammunition and firearms while a felon. Following his release from imprisonment, **ADAMS** will serve a term of supervised release of three years. The United States Probation Office will be permitted to monitor his computer usage while **ADAMS** is on supervision.

On March 25, 2005, **ADAMS** pleaded guilty to four counts of Mail Fraud, ten counts of Wire Fraud, and one count of Making False Statements. His factual stipulation indicated that he opened an eBay account in his true name in 1998, eventually changing his user ID to "madams2283." **ADAMS** began selling various items on eBay, including coins. Beginning around October 20, 2002, **ADAMS** devised a scheme to obtain money by means of materially false and fraudulent pretenses, representations, and promises. **ADAMS'** scheme involved posting auctions for 90% silver coin bags using the eBay ID "madams2283." Using other eBay accounts in alias names, **ADAMS** would place shill bids on his own coin auctions to drive up the prices. Though **ADAMS** kept payments he received from the winning bidders of the coin auctions, he failed to deliver the coins. The scheme involved intended losses of \$29,057.29. On June, 30, 2004, Postal Inspectors interviewed **ADAMS** at his

Granite City home about the eBay auctions posted by him on October 20, 2002 and November 7, 2002. **ADAMS** falsely stated that he had shipped all coins for which he had received payment. As he well knew, **ADAMS** had failed to ship the coins.

**ADAMS** has been ordered to make restitution to four victims located in California, Ohio, North Carolina and Maryland and to eBay in the total amount of \$17,675.29 and to pay special assessments to the United States in the amount of \$1,600.00.

Also on March 25, 2005, **ADAMS** pleaded guilty to an information charging him with possessing eight firearms and ammunition while a felon. The ammunition was discovered during the execution of a federal search warrant at **ADAMS**' home during the eBay auction fraud investigation. **ADAMS** was in the Macoupin County jail at the time of the search, but later arranged for a family member to surrender his firearms to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms.

The eBay auction fraud investigation was conducted by the United States Postal Inspection Service. The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives joined the investigation after Postal Inspectors learned that **ADAMS** was in possession of firearms. Under the auspices of the Regional Computer Crime Enforcement Group of Southwestern Illinois (RCCEG), the Fairview Heights, Wood River, and Highland Police Departments assisted during the investigation. The cases were prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Suzanne M. Garrison.